



LOS ANGELES UNIFIED  
SCHOOL  
DISTRICT

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## Local District 6

### Pupil Services and Attendance

### Paving the Way

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#### Middleton Street's Roaring Jaguars



Middleton Street School prides itself in having created a school culture that emphasizes the three A's: **Attendance**, **Attitude**, and **Achievement**. In attendance, Middleton students have reached outstanding goals. Historically, Middleton has been ranked **Number One** for having the highest "in-seat attendance" among *all* elementary schools throughout LAUSD and this school year was no exception. It was with great pride that they, *again*, accepted this distinction from the School Board. Middleton attributes its high attendance rate to having created a school culture that not only promotes attendance but it also promotes a sense of belonging and creates a sense of safety. Also, Middleton, creates and promotes attendance incentives which continue to be very popular among students. One of their most popular attendance incentives is the "Perfect Attendance Party". At the end of year, students who have had perfect attendance throughout the school year are invited to attend a rollicking, fun-filled party in the presence of invited guests—their parents. During the party, students and parents enjoy cake, carnival games, and raffles. Another popular incentive is the daily "Perfect Attendance Classroom Slip". Classrooms who have perfect attendance for the day earn a perfect attendance slip. Once a class has collected 25, that classroom is awarded fruit snacks. In the area of **Attitude** and **Achievement**, Middleton has made many strides. They set a lofty goal of lowering their suspension and expulsion rates and miraculously have had **NO** suspension or expulsions this year. It is really *not* a miracle because Middleton has implemented a sophisticated behavioral program that daily promotes positive attitudinal occurrences and acknowledges these positive actions during Monday morning assemblies for *all* students and conducts motivational and behavioral re-enforcement assemblies for 4<sup>th</sup>-6<sup>th</sup> grade students *only*. These programs have definitely paid off because Middleton knows that high attendance and a positive attitude equals increased academic achievement and Middleton students have continued to meet and in some instances exceed their API improvement target. The staff at Middleton recognizes that none of these accomplishments could be achieved without the dedication and tireless efforts of the administrators, teachers, parents and support staff.



#### There's Power in the Paws



At the beginning of this school year Victoria Avenue Elementary School implemented a new and highly effective behavioral incentive program entitled "Power Paws". The program involves all members of the school community. The whole idea of the program is to acknowledge students who go out of their way to be extra safe, extra responsible and extra respectful. When a student exemplifies any of these behaviors or acts, they are issued a "Power Paw" (so named for its lion mascot). This could mean that a student was observed helping someone who was hurt or alerting a staff member of a broken chair or a fallen tree. This act would come under the category of maintaining a safe school environment. Another staff member might observe a student picking up trash after lunch rather than participating in recess. This act would come under the category of being extra responsible and caring. And finally, a "Power Paw" could be issued when a student is reprimanded by a person in authority for not observing a behavioral standard but maintains his or her composure until the truth is revealed. This act would come under the category of being extra respectful. Any staff member has the privilege of issuing "Power Paws". They can be issued before school, during psychomotor, at recess, in the computer lab, the library, the cafeteria, lunchtime, as well as in the classroom. However, a staff member can only issue *one* "Power Paw" per week. By the end of the month, all of the "Power Paws" are placed in the giant "Power Paw Drum" and 20 student's names are drawn and they receive a special prize. PSA Counselor Lynn Garcia states that there has been a marked improvement in the behavior of the students at Victoria Avenue Elementary School. She observed students going out of their way to be safe, responsible and respectful. Mrs. Garcia is so excited about the outcomes of this program that she conducted an in-service training to all of the PSA Counselors during a recent professional development workshop.



### Green Tips

1. Ride a bike or walk to work.
2. Water your lawn in the afternoon.
3. Consider washing clothes in a washing machine rather than sending them to the dry cleaner, when possible.
4. Place a paper recycle bin in your office.
5. Place a plastic recycle bin in your office.
6. Find creative uses for items before throwing them away.
7. The next time you purchase a cup of coffee or some other kind of beverage from your favorite "take-out" or "drive-thru" restaurant. Bring your favorite mug from home and have them put the beverage in your cup rather than a "throw away" cup.

HAVE A "GREEN TIP"?  
SEND US YOUR FAVORITE  
"GREEN TIP" AND WE WILL  
PUBLISH IT AND AC-  
KNOWLEDGE YOU!

## WHAT PSA CAN DO FOR YOUR SCHOOLS!

- Get kids in school so that they can learn!
- Collaborate In The Development Of Attendance Plan
  - Develop Incentive Programs
- Involve Community Resources In Solving Attendance Issues
- Institute School Attendance Review Teams (SART), Abolish Chronic Truancy (ACT), or Project A.T.T.E.N.D. Programs
  - Conduct Attendance Accountability Workshops To Key School Staff
    - Schedule Mass Attendance Meetings With Parents
  - Interpret Attendance Education Codes, Policies & Bulletins
    - Provide Individual And Group Counseling To Students
      - Be A Vital Member Of The School Crisis Team
  - Provide Seamless Referrals To Other Programs Within PSA
- Refers Chronic Cases To The Student Attendance Review Board (SARB)

PSA Counselors work with students who are not enrolled, chronically absent and do not respond positively to instructional programs due to serious emotional, familial, psychological, mental and other environmental impediments or traumas.

PSA Counselors receive referrals from administrators, classified and certificated staff to provide direct, ongoing outreach services and/or case management activities related to the student and their academic success. In addition, PSA Counselors can potentially increase funding for academic programs through increased Average Daily Attendance (ADA) funding.

At a school site, a PSA Counselor can help organize comprehensive school attendance improvement programs. Provide consultative services and technical support with child welfare issues such as enrollment, residency, permits, custody and access to pupil records and laws relating to minors, as well as provide student counseling for issues relating to attendance.

### Dionne Y. Ash: PSA Administrator's Spotlight on PSA Counselor:

#### Linda Garcia



Linda Garcia was born to be a social worker. She believes deep within her soul that she was placed on this earth to make a positive difference in her own life and in the lives of others and her warm and open spirit is infectious. As a high school student, she recognized the need for advocacy and empowerment when fellow students at her high school were bullied and felt they had no avenues of escape. During those years, she remembers her friends looking to her for comfort and support. They even nicknamed her "the counselor". They could not have been more fortuitous.

With Linda's constant desire for higher learning, and self growth, as well as an unquenchable yearning to serve her community and the world, Linda realized her dreams. When Linda is not working with LAUSD, she is committed to her family and volunteers her time to aid underprivileged children in Mexico. Linda came to PSA in 2008 with multiple years of experience as a Primary Intervention Counselor (PIC) and is currently fulfilling her PSA counseling responsibilities to Maywood Academy High School, Vernon City Elementary and San Antonio Continuation School. Since her placement at these schools, the attendance rates have soared dramatically. Linda is truly dedicated to impacting the students and parents at her schools and states that she truly

enjoys her day-to-day experiences.

